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ing them; so that, while it takes away the ostensible object of the excursion, it leaves more time for the real one. It is to be hoped that this will be one of the largest and most memorable meetings of botanists we ever have had, and that the result of their meeting will be an additional stimulus to botanical work in all departments.

OPEN LETTERS.

Australian alpine plants.

In reading the "Notes and News" of the last number of the BOTANICAL GAZETTE I was led to recall a paper published in the Proceedings of the Linnean Society of New South Wales, August 23, 1886, by J. Stirling. It consists chiefly in a review and a farther account of evidences of glaciation shown in the higher mountains of the Australian Alps (S. E. Australia.) The culmination of the ice-clad period is supposed to have taken place in later Pliocene or Pleistocene times. He refers to the close relationship which the flora of those mountains presents to that of Tasmania, and that "many species found there (in the Australian Alps), between 2,000 and 5,000 feet, have a wide range, recent researches in the flora of Morocco, in Africa, and on that of Rurum Valley, Afghanistan, having disclosed the presence of numerous species of plants common to the Australian Alps." He then refers to Hooker's remark in his Australian Flora that a cooled atmosphere in intertropical regions corresponding to the glacial epochs of the temperate zones might account for the presence of European and arctic species in antarctic and south temperate zones. It seems to me the character of the mountain flora also would find its explanation here. AUG. F. FOERSTE.

Granville, Ohio.

White and yellow poplars.

While collecting specimens of our so-called poplars (Liriodendron Tulipifera) this spring I called the attention of an intelligent and observant farmer of Lincoln County (Geo. P. Bright) to the following extract from the June ('86) number of *Drugs and Medicines of North America:*

> "*Varieties.*—That there are two forms of the tree, distinguished by the amount of heart wood, was early noticed by lumbermen, and that they are distinct can not, we think, be refuted. Marshall mentions them as early as 1785. Michaux distinguishes two forms with acute and obtuse leaves, which he distinguished as var. acutiloba and var. obtusiloba; and Rafinesque states that the acute-lobed form produces the white wood and the obtuse-lobed the yellow wood. Late botanical writers, however, take no cognizance of these forms; and, while we are convinced that there are certainly two distinct trees, as far as the color of the lumber is concerned, we have not been able to determine that they have different shaped leaves. From an observing farmer (Mr. Thomas Rouse, Crittenden, Ky.), who claims to know the two trees apart by the appearance of the bark, we learn the following: 'The yellow poplar grows

along streams and seems to select a damper location than the white, and the trunk is almost entirely yellow or heart wood, there being but a couple of inches of sap wood on the outside. It is very easy to split, makes good rails, and the lumber lasts a long time. The white poplar grows on hilly woods and dry locations, and the trunk is mostly white or sap wood. It is very difficult to split, and decays in a few years, so it has but little value as a timber.' He states that the young trees can not be distinguished, to his knowledge, by the bark, but that the yellow poplar bark of old trees is in long, horizontal ridges, while the white poplar bark is short and choppy."

Mr. Bright has had a large amount of timber cut off his place, and has handled a large amount of "poplar" lumber. He tells me that he is satisfied that the "white" and "yellow" trees are not different varieties, but different conditions of the same variety at different ages. On a high ridge, quite dry, on his place, he has a poplar wood which he has been cutting out; all of the old trees are yellow, the young are white. In a creek bottom near by, which is occasionally flooded, there is an abundant growth of young white trees. He can not tell the color of the wood from the bark. He mentions a tree in front of his house which his father remembers, some forty years ago, as a white poplar tree. Some two years ago the tree was spilt open by lightning, and the wood—excepting two inches of sap wood—was yellow. It had changed yellow as it grew older. Even in the young trees the heart wood is yellow. I have not been able to find any difference in the appearance of the bloom or leaf. Mr. Bright's idea seems to be a very reasonable one, and is founded on observed facts. H. A. EVANS.

Lancaster, Ky.

Oxalis.

Mr. Thomson's note on autumnal blooming of Oxalis violacea relates to a well-known peculiarity of the plant. In the *American Naturalist* for January, 1882, I called attention to the constant absence of the mid-styled form from this, which should be a trimorphic species. Aside from a figure in Payer's Organogénie, and a record of one doubtful specimen in Hildebrand's paper on "Heterogone species of Oxalis," there is no evidence that this form has ever been observed. I shall be greatly obliged for specimens from any part of the country showing this form of flower—with the pistil intermediate in length between the two sets of stamens.

In going over a very full line of specimens, last winter, I discovered that our flora includes two species of the violacea group that have not been previously distinguished, viz.: O. latifolia, var. and O. divergens, both of which are Mexican species which have extended into our territory. It may be of interest to add that Dr. E. Palmer's Mexican collection of last year includes the rare O. Hernandezii, a plant related to our O. decaphylla, but distinguished by its narrow, entire, hairy leaves.

The most interesting result of this examination, however, is the discovery that we have two trimorphic yellow-flowered species of the corniculata group. One of these is the O. recurva of Elliott, a perennial with creeping rhizomes, dark-bordered leaflets, and large flowers (as compared with O. corniculata or its variety stricta), which occurs from North Carolina to Pennsylvania and Ohio. The other, an Oregon species, which has been confounded with forms of corniculata, I have called O. Suksdorfii, in a paper presented to the Boston Society of Natural History some months ago. It is lower than O. recurva, and destitute of the